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**BULLETIN  
OF THE  
CENTER FOR  
CHILDREN'S  
BOOKS**

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS

## EXPLANATION OF CODE SYMBOLS USED WITH ANNOTATIONS

- \* Asterisks denote books of special distinction.
- R Recommended.
- Ad Additional book of acceptable quality for collections needing more material in the area.
- M Marginal book that is so slight in content or has so many weaknesses in style or format that it should be given careful consideration before purchase.
- NR Not recommended.
- SpC Subject matter or treatment will tend to limit the book to specialized collections.
- SpR A book that will have appeal for the unusual reader only. Recommended for the special few who will read it.

Except for pre-school years, reading range is given for grade rather than for age of child.

- CV Curricular Use.
- DV Developmental Values.

\* \* \*

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# Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO • GRADUATE LIBRARY SCHOOL

Volume 35

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Number 10

## *New Titles for Children and Young People*

Aaron, Chester. *Gideon*. Lippincott, 1982. 81-48066. Trade ed. ISBN 0-397-31992-4; Library ed. ISBN 0-397-31993-2. 181p. Trade ed. \$10.50; Library ed. \$9.89.

R  
7-10 Based on records and on accounts by survivors of Dachau and other concentration camps, this first person novel has the ring of truth, and a bitter, shocking truth it is even for the reader who has become familiar with the details of the Holocaust. Gideon is a young adolescent who, like so many Polish Jews, is in the end the only survivor in his family. Determined to survive, he is able to evade Nazis and pro-Nazis in part because he looks Aryan and has forged papers, in part because of his daring and courage. A smuggler who works with a gang of young Polish thugs, he is able to help people in the Warsaw ghetto; when at last he escapes from the city by swimming through the foul sewers, and takes refuge in a forest, Gideon decides he must go back to try to find his sister; he is caught and taken to Treblinka. The story, moving and dramatic, moves with trenchant inevitability to the rebellion of the Jewish prisoners at Treblinka. Less than half escape, Gideon among them; he eventually comes to the United States, assuming the identity of a Danish immigrant. A moving and terrible story, written with craft and conviction.

C.U. History—Europe

D.V. Courage; Resourcefulness

Adoff, Arnold. *All The Colors of the Race*; illus. by John Steptoe. Lothrop, 1982. 81-11777. Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-00879-8; Library ed. ISBN 0-688-00880-1. 56p. Trade ed. \$9.50; Library ed. \$8.59.

R  
4-6 Adoff's cycle of poems is written from the viewpoint of a child who has one parent who is black and Protestant, one who is white and Jewish. The poetry is free and flowing, reflecting the facets of the child's feelings: resentment at the censorious, pride in the variety of family background, joy in family love, pensiveness in thinking of problems, optimism in thinking of the future, when we "Stop looking / Start loving." The illustrations, brown and white, are often angular in block print style, speckled and stylized, and they echo the vitality and tenderness of the poems' moods.

C.U. Social studies

D.V. Family relations; Interracial understanding; Interreligious understanding

Alexander, Lloyd. *The Kestrel*. Dutton, 1982. 81-15290. ISBN 0-525-45110-2. 244p. \$10.95.

R  
5-8  
\* In a sequel to *Westmark* (reviewed in the June, 1981 issue) Alexander moves, as he did in the Prydain cycle, to deeper issues and subtler levels. This is no less appealing as an adventure tale with a strong story line and rounded, consistent characterizations, but it also considers the ambivalence its protagonist feels when having to choose between love and loyalty or duty, the compassion one may feel for a foe, the

decision between battle and conciliation, and the assuming and sharing of responsibility. The book has the added appeal of familiar characters, as Theo (who in the course of war becomes known as the Kestrel) and Mickle (the waif who proved to be a princess and now is a queen) join with their old friends of *Westmark* to rid their land of traitors from within and enemies from across the border. Another smasher.

D.V. Friendship values; Loyalty; Patriotism

Aliki. *We Are Best Friends*; written and illus. by Aliki. Greenwillow, 1982. 81-6549. Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-00822-4; Library ed. ISBN 0-688-00823-2. 28p. Trade ed. \$9.50; Library ed. \$8.59.

Bright pictures, busy but not overcrowded, add zest to a direct, ingenuous text that describes the dejection of a child whose best friend moves away. It doesn't help Robert's feelings when Peter writes about a new friend he's made—until Robert makes a friend himself. This isn't a new theme or a new treatment; the appeal is in the fact that events are seen from a child's viewpoint and described in a child's forthright way.

D.V. Adaptability; Friendship values

Anno, Mitsumasa, illus. *Anno's Britain*. Philomel, 1982. 81-21058. ISBN 0-399-20861-5. 42p. \$10.95.

Like other Anno travel books, this is an artful mingling of period costume, anachronistic objects, and fictional characters, all of this smoothly incorporated in a larger pattern, in which a tiny blue-clad wayfarer debarks from a small boat to begin his journey through the British Isles. He moves—buying a horse en route—from the countryside through hamlets and towns to London, and reverses the procedure to embark at the shore and row off. There's also a chronological development, although Anno cheerfully disregards reality in placement of details and inclusion of a Robin Hood here or a Pooh there. All of this is great fun; it has a puzzle element for the enjoyment of nonreaders, allure in its details for the addicted Anglophile, and an equal attraction for art lovers, for the paintings are exquisite in details and remarkable in perspective and composition. Another stunner.

C.U. Art—Studying and teaching

D.V. Environmental concepts

Baskin, Tobias. *Hosie's Zoo*; written by Tobias Baskin, et al.; illus. by Leonard Baskin. Viking, 1981. 81-11672. ISBN 0-670-37968-9. 35p. \$10.95.

Like Baskin's earlier books, this oversize volume combines his children's poetic captions of variable quality with pictures (full-page watercolor and ink paintings) of unequivocal excellence. The paintings are usually of the beasts' heads only, although some are full figure; they are superb in the use of color, but even more impressive for the individual qualities Baskin captures: the comically disdainful look of the camel, the ferocity of a snarling tiger, the stolidity and massiveness of the cape buffalo. Some of the poems are simple and ineffectual; some have sharp imagery and really extend or complement the paintings.

C.U. Art appreciation

Benjamin, Carol Lea. *The Wicked Stepdog*; written and illus. by Carol Lea Benjamin. T. Y. Crowell, 1982. 81-43322. Trade ed. ISBN 0-690-04170-5; Library ed. ISBN 0-690-04171-3. 119p. Trade ed. \$9.50; Library ed. \$8.89.

Louise Branford, twelve, is the narrator in a breezy contemporary story set in

Ad 5-7 Manhattan and incorporating many typical concerns of the young adolescent girl: when will she menstruate, will she ever develop physically, will handsome Ryan Bernstein ever notice her? She's also upset when her divorced father, with whom she lives, announces his imminent marriage to Eve, with no warning. Louise likes Eve, but she isn't sure she'll like her as a stepmother, and she's certainly irritated, after the wedding, by some of the things Eve does, not the least of which is to assume that Louise will share in the care, feeding, and walking of Eve's large dog. This is sophisticated, often funny or flippant, and often overwritten (both in style and scope) but it's a better-than-average first novel, and it shows considerable insight into the problems of a volatile only child.

D.V. Pets, care of; Stepparents, adjustment to

Bennett, Jill, comp. *Days Are Where We Live, and Other Poems*; illus. by Maureen Roffey. Lothrop, 1981. 81-8353. ISBN 0-688-00852-6. 39p. \$8.50.

R 3-6 yrs. Slightly rakish pictures, more deft than comic valentines but in that style, are poster-simple, bold and bright, and they match the poems nicely. As she has in earlier mini-anthologies for young children, Bennett—a nursery school teacher—has chosen with discrimination; the poems are of high quality and appealing to children. Light, often funny, consistently seen from the child's viewpoint, the poetry represents the work of many of the best contemporary children's poets.

C.U. Reading aloud

Bess, Clayton. *Story for a Black Night*. Houghton, 1982. 81-13396. ISBN 0-395-31857-2. 84p. \$7.95.

R 5-8 \* "Ain't the night is black tonight? You would like to run playing, but the darkness be too great for you. By force of storm, electric current came to fail . . ." And so a Liberian father tells his children a story of his childhood. Locked into their house, widowed Ma, baby sister Meatta, blind Old Ma, the grandmother, and the narrator, Momo, are startled when two women beg to be let in with their baby. Old Ma is opposed to taking them in, but Ma insists; in the morning, the women are gone and the baby clearly has been abandoned because she has smallpox. That is how tragedy comes to Momo's family, for Ma insists on nursing the waif. Meatta sickens and dies, while the other baby lives, and Ma herself contracts the disease and almost dies. The villagers nearby won't come near the house, but they solicitously bring food and medicine. Momo, too, gets smallpox and recovers. When the baby's grandmother turns up, her daughter dead, to claim the child, Ma refuses to give her up: the baby was abandoned, she saved the child, it is now her baby. The story is taut and tender, deftly structured, vivid in its depiction of the village community as well as of the family, but it is most distinctive in the writing style, which captures the lovely cadence of the language in its dialogue and has the warmth and sonority of the best kind of storytelling in its exposition. A stunning first novel.

D.V. Death, adjustment to; Ethical concepts; Kindness

Byars, Betsy. *The Animal, the Vegetable, and John D Jones*; illus. by Ruth Sanderson. Delacorte, 1982. 81-69665. Trade ed. ISBN 0-440-00122-6; Library ed. ISBN 0-440-00131-5. 150p. Trade ed. \$9.95; Library ed. \$9.89.

R 5-8 \* Although the whole story is told by the author, alternate chapters are from the viewpoint of John D or from the viewpoint of Deanie and Clara, the daughters of a divorced man who has his children with him for a fortnight's beach vacation. To their horror, Dad has arranged for John D's mother to share the beach house. Deanie and Clara bicker a great deal, but they are united in their contempt for John D, an emotion he cordially returns. Only when Clara comes close to drowning do her sister and John

D see beyond the pettiness of their hostility; Deanie even softens toward John D's mother, toward whom she had felt resentment. This doesn't have as strong a story line as some of Byars' stories, but it has the same perceptive exposition of the intricacy of ambivalent relationships. The use of shifting viewpoints works well, partly because of the smoothness of the writing style, partly because the characters and relationships are so quickly and definitely established.

D.V. Boy-girl relations; Jealousy, overcoming

Carrick, Donald. *Harald and the Giant Knight*; written and illus. by Donald Carrick. Houghton, 1982. 81-10243. ISBN 0-89919-060-X. 29p. \$10.95.

R  
2-4 Earth-tone tints are used in framed line drawings that reflect the dramatic actions of a story set in the Middle Ages. Although the story is simply told, it makes some aspects of feudal life and the caste system clear, adding depth to a plot that is stripped but that shows how a child can change when he sees through a facade. Harald is the only son of a poor farmer who supplements his income by making objects of woven reeds. Infatuated by the glamor of knightly jousts and tournaments, young Harald sees a different aspect of knighthood when the knights camp on his father's land to practice. They ruin the crops, hack at fruit trees, eat the poultry and pigs. Disillusioned, Harald comes up with an idea for getting rid of the knights; the chief object in his plan is a huge woven figure of a knight. The ploy is intriguing and successful, a satisfying ending to a satisfying story.

D.V. Resourcefulness

Corcoran, Barbara. *Child of the Morning*. Atheneum, 1982. 81-8057. ISBN 0-689-30876-0. 112p. \$9.95.

R  
6-9 The family doctor said it was nothing to worry about, but Susan and her parents were baffled by the fact that she had had brief spells of unconsciousness ever since she'd had a head injury during a school volleyball game. Sometimes, when this happened, she'd fall. Nobody in her small town would give her a summer job but she did get one, part time, as odd-job girl for a summer theater group; later she was asked to dance in one production. Her performance was fine, although it ended in a black-out. By this time there was a new doctor in town, and he recognized her seizures as epileptic. After a worrisome series of drugs produced only adverse side effects, the right drug for Susan was isolated, and the book ends with Susan at last feeling that her condition can be controlled, and that the future can hold a career in dance for her. Although the parental apathy and medical inertia strain credulity a bit, the story is otherwise nicely crafted, with strong minor characters, good pace, and the theatrical milieu that adds appeal.

D.V. Handicaps, physical, adjustment to

Cosman, Madeleine Pelter. *Medieval Holidays and Festivals: A Calendar of Celebrations*. Scribner, 1981. 81-13597. ISBN 0-684-17172-4. 136p. illus. with photographs. \$12.95.

Ad  
8- Cosman, an academic medievalist, goes through the calendar year, describing one medieval celebration for each month; her text discusses foods, games, rites, costumes, customs, and functions of individual participants. Following this is a chapter called "Transformations and Illusions," which gives instructions (albeit sketchy ones) for making costumes, decorating in medieval style, and transforming contemporary objects into semblances of medieval equipment; last, a chapter of recipes. There are also descriptions throughout the text (of games or ceremonies) that readers can follow if they wish to celebrate in medieval style. A bibliography and an index



extend the usefulness of the text, which is occasionally floridly written but has minor reference use.

C.U. History

Cosner, Shaaron. *Be Your Own Weather Forecaster*. Messner, 1982. 81-14006. ISBN 0-671-42726-1. 94p. illus. with photographs. \$8.79.

M  
4-6 The largest part of this book is devoted to amassing bits of folklore that have to do with weather, so that there are repeated textual references to "it is said," "sailors also believed," "in France they believed," et cetera. There are facts given as well as popular beliefs; it is usually—but not always—possible to distinguish between the two: for example, "Thunder and frost in February may mean a fine autumn, and thunder during Christmas week is supposed to mean a heavy winter. Thunder in January means heavy winds during the year as well as an abundance of corn and cattle." Some home demonstrations are suggested, including making simple measuring devices, all but one of which (a paper hygrometer that uses several chemicals) require easily obtainable materials like straws or paper. An index gives access to the text, which is of limited scientific use and has the air of being collated from notes by a researcher rather than being written by a scientist.

C.U. Science

Cross, Helen Reeder. *Isabella Mine*; illus. by Catherine Stock. Lothrop, 1982. 81-12346. ISBN 0-688-00885-2. 147p. \$9.50.

Ad  
5-6 In a story set in Tennessee during the Depression Era, all of the fifteen children in Molly's school have fathers who are officials of the mining company; perhaps because of this, her story doesn't really reflect the deprivation and desperation of those hard times. There are some period details: Molly goes to a dance and tries the Charleston, and she has a poem accepted by *St. Nicholas* magazine. There are enough small problems and adventures to hold reader interest, but no strong story line; this is primarily a story of family and friends, competently written and with some regional flavor.

Crowley, Arthur. *The Ugly Book*; illus. by Annie Gusman. Houghton, 1982. 81-17863. ISBN 0-395-31858-0. 32p. \$8.95.

Ad  
K-2 Bold composition and color, in stylized, framed pictures illustrate a text that is a rhymed diatribe against such ugly things as butterflies and flowers and stars. The declaimer, who is indeed an ugly man or boy (hard to tell) says, "BUTTERFLIES are nasty things / They have two big repulsive wings," "Now FLOWERS are just mostly weeds / They're something no one really needs," and so on. Children should enjoy the humor of the concept, and the book could be a catalyst for discussion, but the faulty rhymes weaken the text, the meter falters occasionally, and the lack of story line means the book must depend on concept for its appeal.

D.V. Environmental concepts

Davis, Gibbs. *Swann Song*. Bradbury, 1982. 81-18066. ISBN 0-87888-198-0. 192p. \$9.95.

R  
7-9 Elliot Swann is intelligent, amusing, tender, and in love with his tenth-grade classmate Prudence; both had been too-tall loners, and their love is intense, private, innocent, and exclusive. In particular, it excludes Prudence's old friend Mary Tess, who is overweight, generous, and protective of Tim, the lout on whom she has a crush, and of Prudence and her alcoholic mother. When all the stresses in Mary Tess's life coincide at one point, she either is careless and falls—or perhaps jumps—off the

cliff where Prudence had left her alone so that she could keep a late date with Swann. As a problem novel, this is sensitive rather than constructive, but as a love story it is both observant and charming, in part because of the bright protagonists, in part because of the felicity with which Davis has captured the poignant sweetness of first love, and in large part because of the writing style, which does become appropriately serious at times, but which generally has a blithe resilience.

D.V. Boy-girl relations; Death, adjustment to

Demi. *The Adventures of Marco Polo*; written and illus. by Demi. Holt, 1982. 81-13216. ISBN 0-03-061263-2. 29p. \$6.95.

NR  
3-4 A small, square book has a minimal amount of text and looks like a read-aloud picture book, but seems—because of its vocabulary and the concepts of time and distance that must be understood—more suitable for independent readers. Demi uses, as does Piero Ventura in Gian Paola Ceserani's *Marco Polo* (reviewed in the May, 1982 issue), very small, bright drawings. However, the drawings do not give as much information and they are at times given odd captions that may be misconstrued: "Religious freedom," "Birthplace of three wise men," or "Lovely ladies." These are in very small print; the text, in larger print, is staccato and sketchy.

D'Ignazio, Fred. *Working Robots*. Elsevier/Nelson, 1982. 81-17279. ISBN 0-525-66740-7. 147p. illus. with photographs. \$11.50.

R  
7- A computer analyst surveys the kinds of robots that are in use today, dividing his text into chapters on types of robots and the use of robotics in various fields (in the classroom or in industry, for example) and concluding with a chapter on the problems involved in robotics, one of which is its effect on employment. The text is serious but written without complexity or technical jargon, and the material is logically arranged. This book does not cover historical background or fantasy robots; it's a lucid and authoritative book on the present state of robotics with an objective look at the future. A lengthy glossary, a divided bibliography, and a relative index add to its usefulness.

C.U. Science

Dixon, Franklin W. *The Four-Headed Dragon*; illus. by Leslie Morrill. Wanderer/Simon & Schuster, 1981. 81-10427. ISBN 0-671-42340-1; Paper ed. ISBN 0-671-42341-X. 192p. \$7.95; Paper ed. \$2.50.

NR  
4-6 Years pass, times change, but the Hardy boys remain the same: fearless, tireless, and brainless. The Hardy Boys novels remain the same: formulaic mysteries that depend for their solution on large doses of coincidence, contrivance, and accident. All those elements are in full sight in this story of Frank and Joe and their friends in stumbling pursuit of a canny criminal who has gained possession of a weapon (the Annihilator) that can destroy the Alaska pipeline, which the dastardly villain proposes to do for money, m-o-n-e-y, from a foreign power. The weapon has, of course, been invented by a European scientist in a wheelchair . . . and so on. The writing style is slam-bang, golly-gee-whiz pedestrian, with Perils-of-Pauline chapter endings like "The torn end of the rotten trunk struck him a glancing blow and he slipped into unconsciousness!" and the next page, new chapter, beginning, "Fortunately, Joe was unconscious only for a moment."

Ehrlich, Amy, ad. *Annie: The Storybook Based on the Movie*. Random House, 1982. 81-15755. Trade ed. ISBN 0-394-85087-9; Library ed. ISBN 0-394-95087-9. 55p. Trade ed. \$5.95; Library ed. \$6.99.

Stills from the film, full color, are used to illustrate the story, adapted from the film

M version that was based on the stage version that was inspired by the cartoon strip.  
 4-5 The story has suffered in translation: at times text and pictures disagree, as when the text refers to Annie's "curly red pigtailed" while the pictures show a curly crop, and when the writing repeatedly uses trite phrases like "Some deep current of understanding seemed to pass between them," or, "This was a golden opportunity, the chance of a lifetime." The story of a waif who becomes the little darling of a billionaire has a perennial Cinderella appeal, but this version is so padded with the film's extraneous material that it loses what credibility the play achieved, and the combination of banality and vocabulary difficulty of the text weaken it further.

Fisk, Nicholas. *A Rag, A Bone and a Hank of Hair*. Crown, 1982. 81-22192. ISBN 0-517-54635-3. 123p. \$8.95.

Brin is one of the élite, in this science fantasy set in the twenty-first century; because he is young, and in a society in which people can rarely have children, the young are deferred to. He is chosen to make a trip back to a simulated 1940, in a project designed to monitor three "Reborns," chemically created humans, who are capable of reproduction. Brin's problem, as he comes to know the Reborns, is that he feels sympathy for them and their lifestyle, and the authorities warn him that he is thereby interfering with the experiment. Both he and they are in danger of elimination, but Brin is warned that he is the most expendable. The ending is tragic but logical, in a story that is imaginative and thoughtful, a well-told adventure story that is also a provocative reminder that the conflict between individual initiative and compassion and a controlled society is timeless.

D.V. Helpfulness

Fleischman, Albert Sidney. *The Bloodhound Gang in the Case of the Flying Clock*; illus. by William Harmuth. Random House/Children's Television Workshop, 1981. 80-28056. Paper ed. ISBN 0-394-84765-2; Library ed. ISBN 0-394-94765-7. 62p. Paper ed. \$1.50; Library ed. \$4.99.

The young staff of the Bloodhound Detective Agency receives a call from Mr. Keefe, reporting the theft of his valuable clock. With a young policewoman, they listen to Keefe's account of how he saw the thief reflected in a mirror—but they piece the evidence together and prove their theory is right: Keefe has hidden the clock so that he can claim the insurance. This is one of a series that was prepared for television, so it has the action and the resourceful and multiethnic children that may make a popular program; it does not have a convincing plot, however, or the writing style and the humor that have made so many of Fleischman's books deservedly popular.

Fritz, Jean. *The Good Giants and the Bad Pukwudgies*; illus. by Tomie de Paola. Putnam, 1982. 81-17921. Hardcover ed. ISBN 0-399-20870-4; Paper ed. ISBN 0-399-20871-2. 38p. \$10.95.

An eminent author retells a legend of the Wampanoag Indians of Massachusetts, combining several tales to form a "why" story that explains how Buzzard's Bay, Nantucket, and Martha's Vineyard as well as some smaller islands were formed. The people of the Narrow Land (Cape Cod) were plagued by the small, malicious Pukwudgies who could turn themselves into stinging mosquitos or shoot their tiny arrows; only the good giant Maushop could control them, which he lazily did when the First People complained. In developing the story, which is told with flair and humor, Fritz includes other facets of Algonquin legend, like the Sea Woman who lures Maushop into forgetting his family, but the focus is on the giant, whose restless sleep digs out a bay, whose flinging of sand from a moccasin creates an island. There's some crowding of plot, but it's compensated for by the style, the humor (especially in

the terse New England speech pattern in dialogues between Maushop and his wife) and in the illustrations, which are, like all de Paola's work, stylized and rather stiff, but excellent in color and composition.

Graham, Ada. *The Changing Desert*; by Ada and Frank Graham; illus. by Robert Shetterly. Sierra Club/Scribner, 1981. 81-8961. ISBN 0-684-17146-5. 90p. \$11.95.

R  
5-8 Creamy paper is a soft and effective setting for finely-detailed line drawings that are both realistic and elegant, with identifying captions for the desert plants and animals they show; the illustrations are not, however, always placed well. A picture of a jackrabbit, for example, is in a section devoted to Mexican gray wolves. The book describes the desert ecology and the ways in which human incursion is affecting it through carelessness (motorcycle damage) or accident (the introduction of the dominating burro that crowds out indigenous animals) or design (thieves who steal cactus). The authors point out ways in which such factors, as well as grazing and irrigation, have adversely affected the ecological balance of much of the wilderness of the American Southwest in a book that is all the more an effective plea for conservation because of its moderate tone and direct, capable writing style.

C.U. Science

Heide, Florence Parry. *Time's Up!* illus. by Marilyn Hafner. Holiday House, 1982. 81-13240. ISBN 0-8234-0441-2. 119p. \$8.95.

R  
4-6 Noah and his parents have just moved to the country and he despairs of ever making friends. He also despairs of his parents: his mother is amicable but feckless, always with ear plugs to shut out the world while she works on her thesis, and his father is a fanatic about efficiency, always timing Noah and giving him elaborate instructions for Noah's many chores. The plot, like the style, is loose and breezy, so that the character exaggeration is almost always tongue-in-cheek and always humorous. The story is told by Noah, and it's primarily a tale of adapting to a new environment and making new friends, but when the crunch comes (they have barely adjusted when Dad announces they're moving again) Mom is disenchanted, in part because of her studies and in part because she is pregnant. Noah saves the day because he's never mailed the letter accepting the new job, so they don't have to move. The course of action is related to the characters, exaggerated though they may be; things don't just happen by contrivance. A sunny and often witty book.

D.V. Adaptability; Parent-child relations

Henson, Hilary. *Robots*. Warwick, 1982. 81-51793. ISBN 0-531-09189-9. 77p. illus. with photographs. \$9.90.

Ad  
6- Like Barbara Krasnoff's *Robots: Reel to Real* (reviewed in the April, 1982 issue) this discusses some of the robots and androids of film and fiction as well as the intricate machines used in research and industry; it also gives a brief history of robots, including early calculating machines and automated toys. The text is printed in two columns, the print broken up by profuse illustrations, some of which are garish drawings. Written by a British science journalist, the text is informative and accurate, broad in scope and covering much the same material as is in the Krasnoff book and—although the approach is different—in the Fred D'Ignazio title above. A brief glossary and index are included. The book's weaknesses are the writing style and the very small print.

Himmelman, John. *Talester the Lizard*; written and illus. by John Himmelman. Dial, 1982. 81-68775. Trade ed. ISBN 0-8037-8787-1; Library ed. ISBN 0-8037-8788-X. 28p. Trade ed. \$8.95; Library ed. \$8.89.

Thin, green, and pop-eyed, Talester lives curled inside a leaf that hangs over a

Ad small pond; each morning he happily greets another lizard in the pond below and is  
K-2 comforted by having his friend smile when he smiles, mope when he mopes. One day his friend disappears and Talester hunts for him to no avail. He sadly returns home in the rain—and when he looks out, after the storm is over, there’s his friend! Pastel pictures, spare in composition, make it clear that Talester sees his reflection, and children can enjoy the superiority of knowing that; whether they will understand why the reflection disappears is moot, although those who have lived where they can see ponds dry up when shallow water evaporates should comprehend. Simply told, adequately structured.

Hoban, Lillian. *Ready, Set, Robot!* written by Lillian and Phoebe Hoban; illus. by Lillian Hoban. Harper, 1982. 81-47731. Trade ed. ISBN 0-06-022345-6; Library ed. ISBN 0-06-022346-4. 64p. (I Can Read Books). Library ed. \$7.89; Trade ed. \$7.95.

Ad Although the tubby little robots don’t have the engaging quality of Hoban’s draw-  
2-3 ings of children, they should appeal to beginning readers because of the popularity of almost anything to do with robots. The story has no human characters; there is a robot dog, Big Rover, and robots with such names as Super Scan, Micromax, and Rocko, who compete in an electronic obstacle race with the protagonist, Sol-1. Sol-1’s mother claims he is the messiest robot in Zone One, and indeed his slapdash preparation is almost self-defeating, but he wins the race because he is smart—and also because he has some help from Big Rover. This has plenty of action, but it is not strong in style, especially in dialogue.

Hughes, Shirley. *Alfie Gets in First*; written and illus. by Shirley Hughes. Lothrop, 1982. 81-8427. Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-00848-8; Library ed. ISBN 0-688-00849-6. 29p. Trade ed. \$8.50; Library ed. \$7.63.

R The bow-windowed row houses of a typically British street are the background for  
3-5 Hughes’ deftly realistic ink and wash drawings in a simple story that is firm in  
yrs. structure and smooth in writing style. Alfie, racing ahead of his mother and his baby sister as they return from grocery shopping, reaches the front door first; after Mom has unlocked the door and gone down the steps to get the baby, Alfie dashes into the hall shouting “I’ve won!” Unfortunately, he slams the door. Unfortunately, Mom’s key is inside with Alfie. Crisis! Just as the milkman brings a ladder for the window cleaner to use in getting to an upstairs window, the door opens: a beaming Alfie has thought of a way to solve the problem. This should be very gratifying for young children who can share Alfie’s pride in resourcefulness.

D.V. Resourcefulness

Hutchins, Pat. *1 Hunter*; written and illus. by Pat Hutchins. Greenwillow, 1982. 81-6352. Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-00614-0; Library ed. ISBN 0-688-00615-9. 22p. Trade ed. \$9.50; Library ed. \$8.59.

R Many counting books move from one to ten, as this does; some of them re-  
2-5 capitulate, as this does. But few of them tell a story that has a gentle message and is  
yrs. amusing, and is illustrated with the sort of originality and craftsmanship that has won the Kate Greenway Medal for its creator (*The Wind Blew*, 1974). Here an elderly hunter, bespectacled and grim, stalks past two elephants, three giraffes, four ostriches, and so on—and never sees any of them. The visual joke, easy for small children to spot, is that each group of animals is seen twice: first in part (as when the hunter marches between the tall legs of the giraffes or strides across the green stepping stones (crocodiles) of a pond, and second in fully identifiable view after the hunter has passed. As decorative as it is useful.

Keller, Beverly. *My Awful Cousin Norbert*; illus. by Bobby Lewis. Lothrop, 1982. 81-6068. Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-00742-2; Library ed. ISBN 0-688-00743-0. 61p. Trade ed. \$8.50; Library ed. \$7.63.

R 2-4 Bad enough to have to get dressed up for dinner but eat in the kitchen with detestable Norbert to keep him company, bad enough to have to tolerate Norbert's nasty remarks about Phil's parents, but when Norbert spoils the special pie Father has made for Mother's visiting boss and blames Phil, it's the bitter end. Or is it? In a humorous, lightly and deftly told story, justice prevails. The boss is delighted with the hastily substituted fruit and cheese dessert, she thinks Phil is a nice boy because her dog licks his shoes (which is where Norbert spilled the pie) and—best of all—Father overhears a remark that makes him aware that the culprit was not Phil, as he'd assumed, but Norbert. Just enough exaggeration adds a fillip to a scratchily illustrated but nicely concocted tale.

D.V. Sex roles

Kellogg, Steven. *The Mystery of the Stolen Blue Paint*; written and illus. by Steven Kellogg. Dial, 1982. 81-15314. Trade ed. ISBN 0-8037-5654-2; Library ed. ISBN 0-8037-5659-3. 27p. \$6.95.

Ad 3-5 yrs. Brisk and almost ingenuous, a slight plot is lifted by the amicable tone of the story, and by the humor and action of the black and white drawings relieved by the blue of the stolen paint. Going outdoors with a large pot of blue paint, Belinda's efforts to paint a blue picture for her room are thwarted first by bothersome little cousin Jason and his friends, then by a windstorm, then by the disappearance of the paint. Belinda suspects the younger children, but the culprit proves to have been her dog, who (unlikely event) ate the paint. Ashamed of having accused the children, Belinda promises to read as many books as they want. Last picture: children returning with stacks and stacks of books. Not much mystery here, but plenty of action, a cheerful milieu, and rather a nice relationship among the children of varying ages.

Kerr, M. E. *What I Really Think of You*. Harper, 1982. 81-47735. Trade ed. ISBN 0-06-023188-2; Library ed. ISBN 0-06-023189-0. 208p. Trade ed. \$10.90; Library ed. \$9.89.

Ad 7-9 As she has in earlier novels, Kerr chooses a segment of society not usually found in books for young people; here the two protagonists are children of Pentecostal preachers. Opal feels ambivalence and some embarrassment about the shouting and the speaking in tongues at her father's church, especially when her peers who are in the town's better high school come to visit and snicker. Jesse Pegler's father is a television personality, a glib and successful preacher envied by Opal's family. Chapters are told alternately by Jesse and Opal, and this gives the story some breadth as the two become uneasy friends (Jesse asks Opal for a date at the insistence of the girl he really likes, while Opal has long had a crush on Jesse's brother). This gives a reader some acquaintance with the behind-the-scenes lives of one kind of clerical family, but it never fuses into a smooth, sophisticated narrative as do most of Kerr's novels, and the ending (Opal develops the gift, surpassing her mother, to "sing tongues," and declares her love for all those who had once found her and her family's religious practices comic) is weak because the conflicts and problems of the story do not seem necessary precursors to the final development.

Krasilovsky, Phyllis. *The First Tulips in Holland*; illus. by S. D. Schindler. Doubleday, 1982. 81-43109. Trade ed. ISBN 0-385-17463-2; Prebound ed. ISBN 0-385-17464-0. 28p. \$12.95.

Ad K-3 An oversize book is illustrated with paintings that are richly colored, accurate in costume and architectural details, but most notable for the precise and delicate depiction of the tulips in the story. The explanation of how tulips came to Holland is



fictional: a Dutch visitor brought some bulbs from Persia, the flowers were much coveted and he was offered beautiful gifts in exchange; a young man who had observed the flowers fell in love with the daughter of the house, married her, grew tulips professionally, and the flowers became so popular that every household had them. The story is followed by the author's account of the facts: the bulbs came to Holland from Turkey via Czechoslovakia and were popularized after thieves stole them from the Leiden botanical gardens. The book is lovely to look at, the story adequately told, but structurally contrived.

Kübler-Ross, Elisabeth. *Remember the Secret*; illus. by Heather Preston. Celestial Arts, 1982. 81-68454. ISBN 0-89087-332-1. 26p. \$8.95.

NR  
3-4 Fatherless Suzy and her friend Peter are happy whenever they spend time with their friends and guardian angels, Willy and Theresa, who give them advice on how to be happy and peaceful and loving, who tell them that God called people to him and gave them a great gift, the gift of free choice. Suzy and Peter travel with Theresa and Willy (pedestrian illustrations show them as adults in vaguely medieval garb) into their world where all is peace and love. Of course nobody believes the children when they tell of their friends and their visits to the lovely land of pure love. Peter becomes ill and dies, and Suzy knows that now he is an angel, too, so that now Suzy will have three guardian angels to visit her. Given the serious work that the author has done on death and dying, this presentation for children seems a frivolous fantasy. While death is a part of life and, as the growing numbers of books of fiction and nonfiction attest, a fact that most adults feel children should know and accept, this book seems unlikely preparation for such acceptance. Guardian angels are seldom observed sitting about in sandboxes, and reports of their inviting children to join them in nude and innocent romping (Willy tells Peter that "God . . . created our bodies and . . . we should be proud of them. . .") have not been widespread. This mawkishly written pastiche of realism, theology, fantasy, and psychology just doesn't work.

D.V. Death, adjustment to

Kushner, Donn. *The Violin-Maker's Gift*; illus. by Doug Panton. Farrar, 1982. 81-19406. ISBN 0-374-38155-0. 74p. \$8.95.

R  
5-6 Winner of the 1981 Canadian Library Association Book of the Year for Children Award, this is a gentle fantasy in the folk tradition, illustrated by heavily hatched black and white drawings. The setting is the French Pyrenees, where Gaspard the violin-maker lived in contented isolation with his patient donkey, leaving his hut only to take his instruments to market in the town nearby. It was there that he rescued a young bird trapped in the church belfry, later giving the bird to the keeper of the toll gate, Matthias, as a tip for his services. Gaspard began to hear rumors that the bird could not only talk but also predict the future; when he saw the bird, which had grown large and beautiful (looking, in the illustrations, like a lyrebird) and realized that Matthias was exploiting the creature he stole it and set it free. Before it left, the bird told Gaspard a great secret, so that from that time on the violin-maker's instruments sang as though they had a soul. This may not appeal to readers who crave action and excitement, but it has a mellow, almost nostalgic quality and a quiet humor that, combined with the twin appeals of magic and justice, may be enjoyed by readers who can appreciate the nuance of the writing.

D.V. Animals, kindness to

Levitin, Sonia. *The Year of Sweet Senior Insanity*. Atheneum, 1982. 81-8081. ISBN 0-689-30883-3. 192p. \$10.95.

Leni and her two best friends, Angie and Rhonda, plan to work and save money all

R 8-10 through their senior year of high school so that they can take a celebratory trip to Hawaii when they graduate. It doesn't work out, just as other aspects of Leni's life don't work out; she is deeply in love with Blair and invites him to stay with her when her parents go away for a week, but her plans for an ecstatic union end with a broken waterbed and a quarrel. By the time of graduation, each of the three girls has decided—for different reasons—to cancel the trip. Leni tells the story, which has a good balance in the attention given to the various aspects of her life, and tells it in a flowing, natural style that has bittersweet, humorous, or intense passages, the changes giving pace to a story that is sharply evocative of the end of adolescence and its turbulent emotional conflict.

D.V. Boy-girl relations; Friendship values

Lionni, Leo. *Let's Make Rabbits*; written and illus. by Leo Lionni. Pantheon, 1982. 81-18713. Trade ed. ISBN 0-394-85196-X; Library ed. ISBN 0-394-95196-4. 28p. Trade ed. \$9.95; Library ed. \$9.99.

Ad 3-5 yrs. A scissors and a pencil each make a rabbit, and the two rabbits immediately become good friends. One is drawn in black and white, the other is a collage of small geometric print designs. They are hungry, so they ask the scissors and pencil for food, and they get a collage carrot and a sketched carrot. Later they are hungry again, see a carrot, decide it's real (it's painted) because it casts a shadow and then they are delighted because they themselves cast shadows and it means that they, too, are real. The illustrations are attractive, bold and simple against the spacious white of the pages, but the text is very thin and very brief albeit imaginative.

C.U. Art—study and teaching

McHargue, Georgess. *The Turquoise Toad Mystery*. Delacorte, 1982. 81-69664. ISBN 0-440-08911-5. 137p. \$9.95.

R 5-8 Ben Pollock, the twelve-year-old sleuth of *Funny Bananas*, is invited to go on a dig being run by a friend of the family, "Aunt" Celie, an anthropologist. A good amateur photographer, Ben is increasingly suspicious, as he prowls about alone looking for subjects, of some of the things he sees and hears. He confides his fears that someone is planning a theft to his aunt's assistant, Curt. There's plenty of action, even a bit of danger to spice the story, and both the color of the desert setting and the anthropological lore add to the appeal of the story. It's well written, although the author's clue—or cue—as to the culprit's identity is, unfortunately, broadly signalled in the third chapter.

Meddaugh, Susan. *Too Many Monsters*; written and illus. by Susan Meddaugh. Houghton, 1982. 81-7068. ISBN 0-395-31862-9. 31p. \$8.95.

M 4-6 yrs. In the deep center of the dark forest there were one hundred monsters, and all but one of them were mean; the exception was Howard, who didn't like the other monsters or the gloom of the forest. One day all the others chased Howard up a tree, the tree crashed, and that's why Howard now lives happily in the sunny glade from which all the other monsters fled after the fallen tree let in the sunshine. A slight plot, an adequately told story, a popular subject. The illustrations are restrainedly ghoulish, and children will probably enjoy the change from blue-green forest depths to the cheery, warmer colors at the end of the story.

Morris, Christopher G., ed. *Macmillan Dictionary for Children*. Macmillan, 1982 (revised ed.). 81-13651. ISBN 0-02-578790-X. 756p. illus. \$12.95.

A revision of the work first published in 1975 (reviewed in the December, 1975

Ad 3-6 issue) is in substantially the same format: two columns per page, amply illustrated with small full-color pictures, and with a pronunciation guide on every double-page spread. The prefatory material is explicit, both in giving instructions for using the book and in discussing the growth and change of the English language. Definitions are usually clear, although there are exceptions; "away," for example, is not defined but used in six short sentences. Some material has been deleted; "abortion," poorly defined in the original edition, has been dropped. Heroin is cited, but not marijuana. The definition for "sulky" is "a light carriage," but no indication is given that the word has another and quite different meaning. Like the first edition, this is an adequate compilation and easy to use, but it has minor weaknesses.

Mulligan, Kevin. *Kid Brother*. Lothrop, 1982. 81-20725. ISBN 0-688-00896-8. 157p. \$9.50.

M 7-9 The story is told by Brad, fifteen; already overshadowed by the older brother of whom he is jealous, Brad is heartsick because he's ruined a performance by a musical group and furious because it was his brother's presence that made him nervous. Spending the summer with his Aunt Sheila, whom he hasn't seen for six years, Brad is blissful. Sheila treats him like a friend, encourages him to play his saxophone, and secretly invites his parents and brother to hear him play with a group at the end of the summer. The story ends with Brad conquering his nervousness about perpetrating another fiasco. All of the characters seem overdrawn: there's nothing likable about the brother, Mom is almost a stereotype of the dithery and emotional mother, and Sheila—intended to be the strong character of the story—is so free and easy she's not believable: in her first remarks to Brad as they meet at the airport, she refers to an alcoholic friend who's an actor as "self-destructive, but a delight in bed." This has a constructive relationship despite the fact that Sheila's overdrawn, and it does show an adolescent's need for identification and approbation, but it's weak in writing style, especially in dialogue.

D.V. Aunt-nephew relationship; Self-confidence

Myers, Walter Dean. *Won't Know Till I Get There*. Viking, 1982. 81-71128. ISBN 0-670-77862-1. 176p. \$9.95.

R 6-9 Myers uses two contemporary themes, nicely knit together, in a story about black adolescents who, as a group did in his *The Young Landlords* (reviewed in the November, 1979 issue), show that young people today can have a social conscience. The narrator is Stephen, who is fourteen and an only child; he feels some ambivalence about the idea of having a foster child added to the family, and when the child arrives and proves to be a hostile young delinquent, Earl, Steve is apprehensive. With two friends, they are picked up by the police after spray-painting a train, and they're sentenced to work in an old people's home. Theme one: the integration of Earl into the family, which leads to a plan for adoption. Theme two: the four young people learn not to stereotype old people, in fact they become friends and join in an effort to gain a measure of independence for the residents. The writing style is breezy, especially in dialogue, and the story has plenty of action and a positive tone. Despite the light treatment, Myers treats sensitive issues, and he does so with sympathetic insight.

D.V. Friendship values; Helpfulness; Older-younger generations; Social behavior

Nance, John. *Lobo of the Tasaday*; written and illus. with photographs by John Nance. Pantheon, 1982. 81-14113. Trade ed. ISBN 0-394-85007-7; Library ed. ISBN 0-394-95007-1. 53p. \$9.95.

Black and white photographs illustrate a book about the Tasaday, a tribe number-

- R 4-6 ing twenty-six at the time (early in the 1970's) a group of journalists visited them on their island in the Philippines. "Tasaday" means "people of the home place," and the isolated Tasadays thought, until recently, that they and their friends were the only people on earth. Lobo, ten at the time of the visit, is used as an example of a boy's role in the primitive society, but this is more about the tribe than about Lobo, and it gives a full picture of the communal life, the respect for nature, the belief in an omnipotent being (the Owner of all things) and the ways in which the Tasaday live and work, dress, gather food, and play. A large part of the text, written in a direct style, dignified but not formal, describes the way in which a hunter, Defal, who had encountered the Tasaday and their Stone Age way of life, convinces them to trek to the edge of their rain forest and the way in which they react to the appearance and appurtenances of a government official who had flown in to help the tribe become prepared for contact with modern life, since it was anticipated that there would be an industrially motivated incursion into the Tasaday's remote rain forest. Fascinating.

C.U. Social studies

Oakley, Graham. *Hetty and Harriet*; written and illus. by Graham Oakley. Atheneum, 1981. 81-8024. ISBN 0-689-30888-4. 31p. \$11.95.

- R K-3 Hetty, a young chicken, is at the bottom of the pecking order and accepts her lot with equanimity; Harriet, the second-youngest, is resentful. There's also a personality difference, Hetty being sweetly agreeable and Harriet quarrelsome and dissatisfied. This is a one-gag story and therefore not quite as amusing as other Oakley books, although the yeasty style and engagingly detailed pictures are no less appealing. The two chickens run off and find, probably to nobody's surprise, that there's no place like home. But they don't discover this until they have tried a series of other places, each time at Harriet's instigation; each time Harriet soon begins to carp, blames Hetty, and spots another place that is absolutely perfect.

Oxford Scientific Films. *Harvest Mouse*; illus. with photographs by George Bernard, Sean Morris, and David Thompson. Putnam, 1982. 81-10685. ISBN 0-399-20851-8. 30p. \$8.95.

- R 3-5 Fine color photography, with some enlargements, shows the activities, the milieu, and the predators in the life of the tiny and rather beguiling mouse, russet-furred and bright-eyed. In the usual format of this Oxford series, the pictures follow several pages of text; the latter describes, in a brisk and straightforward style, the appearance, the mating and breeding practices, the dietary habits, and the agility of harvest mice. It also deplores the harvesting machines that have replaced the haystacks that are a favorite haven for harvest mice, pointing out that they eat so little as to cause only minimal damage to cereal crops, while their consumption of insects is a benefit to farmers.

C.U. Nature study; Science

Oxford Scientific Films. *Jellyfish and Other Sea Creatures*; illus. with photographs by Peter Parks. Putnam, 1982. 81-10672. ISBN 0-399-20852-6. 30p. \$8.95.

- R 4-6 As are the other books in this excellent British series, this is profusely illustrated by first-rate photographs in full color. This follows the usual format of the series, with a few pages of fact-packed text that describes the species of coelenterata called jellyfish, explaining how they mate, reproduce, feed, function anatomically, defend themselves, and so on. The rest—and major part—of the book is given to photographs, fully captioned but not often giving an indication of scale. The book's use is undoubtedly wider than the middle grades range for which it is most suited, since the

dignified text and handsome pictures should attract older readers as well, and the photographs alone can be appreciated by quite young children.

C.U. Science

Peavy, Linda. *Allison's Grandfather*; illus. by Ronald Himler. Scribner, 1981. 81-2297. ISBN 0-684-17017-5. 32p. \$8.95.

R  
3-4 The death of an elderly man is seen from the viewpoint of his grandchild's friend, Erica, who had come to know Allison when she visited her grandparents. Allison's grandfather had been a cowboy and loved to tell stories about his experiences to the two girls. Now Erica remembers how kind he was, and how busy; she thinks about him while her own mother is at the hospital so that Allison's grandmother can go home for a bit. When Mama comes home in the morning, she gently tells Erica that the old man had died at dawn, peaceful and smiling. Together Erica and her mother rock and remember; Erica asks a few questions about dying, but she would rather think about how it was for Allison's grandfather when he was young, riding over the mountains in the sunlight. This is a quiet book, almost static, and it won't answer all a child's questions; indeed, it may not appeal to every child, but it can serve as a soft introduction to the topic, and it's tender without being maudlin. Himler's pencil drawings, as soft as the text, show cozy interiors and quite dramatic outdoor scenes.

D.V. Death, adjustment to; Grandparent-child relations

Peterson, P. J. *Nobody Else Can Walk It for You*. Delacorte, 1982. 81-69669. ISBN 0-440-06415-5. 215p. \$10.95.

R  
7-10 Laura, eighteen, is the leader of a Y group of seven adolescents on a wilderness backpacking trip; her only assistant is Irene, a volunteer who is old enough to be their grandmother. Three noisy, tough teenage motorcyclists turn up and at first are only raucous, teasing nuisances—but they stay on, proving to be a menace. Angry because they are not wanted, the three are destructive and punitive as they follow the Y group, so Laura's whole focus is on getting her kids away from the trio's violence and vengeance. The characterization is superb, from the vicious leader of the motorcycle group to the fearful but courageous youngsters, all well-differentiated. The story has action galore, the action is developed at a good pace, the suspense is vividly communicated, and the writing style is smooth and controlled.

D.V. Older-younger generations; Resourcefulness; Responsibility

Pomerantz, Charlotte. *If I Had a Paka: Poems in Eleven Languages*; illus. by Nancy Tafuri. Greenwillow, 1982. 81-6624. Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-00836-4; Library ed. ISBN 0-688-00837-2. 28p. Trade ed. \$9.50; Library ed. \$8.59.

R  
K-3 The book's subtitle may be misleading; the poems are not in eleven languages, but the words from other languages are used in poems written in English and, in some cases, a poem is given in English as well as in another language. One poem, for example, consists only of the names of trees in Dutch, and it is followed by an English translation. The use of such languages as Indonesian, Spanish, Serbo-Croatian, and Native American is novel, appealing, and laudable; the paintings are spacious, bright, and clearly defined and composed; and the simply written, child-oriented poems are sturdy and easy to understand because of the care with which words from other languages are incorporated. The first poem, using Swahili words, is a good example; it begins, "If I had a paka/meow, meow/meow, meow/ I would want a mm-bwa/ bow wow bow wow," and goes on to describe other wanted pets and then, "I'd want a rafeeki / good friend ..."

Preiss, Byron, ed. *The Art of Leo and Diane Dillon*. Ballantine, 1981. 80-66555. Paper ed. ISBN 0-345-28449-6; Hardcover ed. ISBN 0-345-29386-X. 91p. illus. with photographs and plates. Paper ed. \$14.95; Hardcover ed. \$30.00.

R  
6- An oversize book is profusely illustrated with examples of the skill and versatility of the Dillons' work, and the glossy pages present these examples in a handsome and dignified style. Each reproduction, on the recto page, is faced by a white page on which a small black and white picture has descriptive information and a brief statement by the Dillons, the whole taking up about a sixth of the page, in a neat column that is boxed but not framed. That this is in very small print contributes to appearance but not to readability. The pages of pictures are prefaced by a lengthy and detailed description of the Dillons' work, with a chronological and knowledgeable discussion of styles, media, and techniques. This is a fascinating and beautiful book that should be useful particularly to art students or students of art appreciation.

C.U. Art—study and teaching; Art appreciation

Radley, Gail. *Nothing Stays the Same Forever*. Crown, 1981. 81-12515. ISBN 0-517-54465-2. 148p. \$8.95.

Ad  
5-7 Carrie, twelve, is the narrator in a story about a young person's adjustment to parental remarriage; Carrie feels resentment (it's only four years since Mom died) and jealousy (they were doing fine without this Sharon) and irritation because her older sister accepts and even seems to like Sharon. It is Sharon who helps Carrie understand and adjust to another change, when the elderly neighbor of whom she has become fond has a heart attack and then is sent to a nursing home. Carrie's acceptance of Sharon develops with realistic rationale and pace, and although the book is not on a highly original theme, it is not formulaic treatment; it is smoothly written, with depth in characterization and relationships. Not an impressive first novel, but a creditable one that indicates potential for excellence.

D.V. Older-younger relations; Stepparents, adjustment to

Rinaldi, Ann. *Promises Are for Keeping*. Walker, 1982. 81-70391. ISBN 0-8027-6442-8. 187p. \$10.95.

Ad  
6-9 In a sequel to *Term Paper* (reviewed in the October, 1980 issue) Nicki is in trouble because of her lack of responsibility; Larry, a doctor who is one of the two older brothers who are her guardians, is already irate because a silly friend has made a prankish telephone call, resulting in a tapped line—and when he discovers that Nicki has taken some birth control pills from his office, Larry is both angry and heartsick. (They're for a friend, but Nicki can't tell him that.) As a corrective to her rebellious behaviour, Nicki is ordered to begin working as a hospital volunteer. From that and other experiences Nicki begins to understand that in the complexities of human relationships there cannot be abuse, there must be forgiveness, and one must take responsibility for one's behavior. This is written with consistency in characterization and a fluent style with natural dialogue, but it is a bit overcrowded in plot: the friend for whom Nicki has taken the pills becomes pregnant, has an abortion, and becomes ill; Larry and his girl break up; a friend who is on probation breaks his parole at Nicki's instigation, and Nicki overhears some criminals threatening Larry, a sequence that ends with the police shooting the man who has a gun in Larry's ribs.

C.U. Social behavior

D.V. Brother-sister relations; Responsibility



Ruby, Lois. *Two Truths in My Pocket*. Viking, 1982. 81-70401. ISBN 0-670-73724-0. 137p. \$10.95.

Ad 7-10 In six short stories, the author examines the emotions and problems of Jewish adolescents, most of the problems being concerned with some aspect of Judaism. In the title story, for example, a rabbi's son decides he cannot also become a rabbi as his father hopes—while the rabbi's daughter wants no other vocation. In another story the parents of a girl who is black and Jewish refuse to let her date a boy who is white and Jewish. Ruby's stories have a variety of life-styles and tangential issues, but the focus is on the Jewish experience; while the writing style and characterization are adequate, the book has enough repetition and narrowness of scope to be tedious at times.

C.U. Religious education

D.V. Intercultural understanding

Sachar, Louis. *Johnny's in the Basement*. Avon/Flare, 1982. 81-65064. ISBN 0-380-78782-2. 126p. \$1.95.

NR 4-6 After his eleventh birthday, Johnny Laxatayl's parents heap responsibilities on him; they also decide the huge collection of bottle caps that he has in the basement must go. Johnny has found a kindred spirit, Valerie, at dancing school, the bond being their common detestation of dancing. The story ends with Johnny's mother screeching, just as she used to, for her son. This time (end of story) he's in the basement again but what he's doing is preparing to kiss Valerie. The characters are drawn with no depth or perception, the story line is slight, the dialogue artificial, and the writing style pedestrian, jerky, and repetitive.

D.V. Boy-girl relations

Scarry, Huck. *On the Road*; written and illus. by Huck Scarry. Philomel, 1981. 81-5814. Trade ed. ISBN 0-399-20818-6; Library ed. ISBN 0-399-61183-5. 30p. Trade ed. \$7.95; Library ed. \$7.99.

R 3-5 The pages of an oversize book are used for many pictures of vehicles of all kinds, particularly cars. Each of these has, next to it, a descriptive caption. There is also, carried in a box on each double-page spread, a running commentary about Peter Pebble, an indefatigable driver; it describes incidents rather than providing a story. The vehicles that crowd the pages are from many countries, the period covered in the book extends from 1878 to 1929, and the settings vary. Despite the clutter of the pages, this should appeal to car buffs, since the machines are nicely detailed; in addition, there are intriguing comic details, some as broad as a fisherman hooking a hat, some as subtle as a long loaf of bread lying, with a triangle of cheese and a wine bottle, alongside a French river.

C.U. Transportation (Unit)

Schick, Eleanor. *Joey on His Own*; written and illus. by Eleanor Schick. Dial, 1982. 81-68770. Library ed. ISBN 0-8037-4302-5; Paper ed. ISBN 0-8037-4301-7. 56p. \$7.89.

R 1-3 Joey tells the story of his first solo shopping trip, in a book illustrated with line and crayon drawings that are neat, realistic representations of the urban scene. Because his mother must stay home with a sister who is ill, Joey is given money and instructions and sent out to buy bread. He worries about the mean boy and the barking dog he has to pass, finds that the traffic seems noisier and the buildings taller when he's not with Mom, and thinks the store seems more crowded. However, people are

helpful, several adults comment on how grownup he is to shop alone, and when Joey walks home he isn't bothered by the traffic or the bully or the big dog. Later, when he's eating a sandwich made of the bread that he bought by himself, Joey concludes that it never tasted so good. Although the writing style is bland, it moves at a good pace and is believable as a child's monologue; the story should appeal to beginning readers (and to a read-aloud audience) because it demonstrates credibly the young child's need to achieve and pride in assumption of responsibility.

C.U. Reading aloud; Reading, beginning

D.V. Responsibility; Self-reliance

Schwartz, Alvin, comp. *Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark*; illus. by Stephen Gammell. Lippincott, 1981. 80-8728. Trade ed. ISBN 0-397-31926-6; Library ed. ISBN 0-397-31927-4; Paper ed. ISBN 0-397-31970-3. 111p. Trade ed. \$8.25; Library ed. \$7.89; Paper ed. \$4.95.

R  
4-7 The dramatic black and white illustrations, misty and eerie, are just right for a ghostly anthology; many of the stories include suggestions to the storyteller ("Turn out any lights," or "Now scream") and this is indeed a good source for the storyteller as well as for reading aloud or for independent reading. Almost all the tales and poems are brief; some are humorous; all have been chosen with care for effectiveness and variety. Notes on sources are included, as is a divided bibliography.

C.U. Reading aloud; Storytelling

Schwartz, Joel L. *Upchuck Summer*; illus. by Bruce Degen. Delacorte, 1982. 81-69670. Trade ed. ISBN 0-440-09264-7; Library ed. ISBN 0-440-09269-8. 148p. Trade ed. \$9.95; Library ed. \$9.89.

Ad  
4-6 Twelve-year-old Richie is the narrator, and his description of summer camp focuses on his attempts to avoid Chuck, the "nerd" of the cabin who dogs Richie's footsteps. This is often amusing in the boys-and-plays tradition, and it shows some maturing as Richie learns not to sulk or hold a grudge, but the writing style is intermittently choppy and the characterization is superficial. For those who like camp stories leavened by humor, this will probably have appeal.

D.V. Age-mate relations

Slote, Alfred. *Rabbit Ears*. Lippincott, 1982. 81-47760. Trade ed. ISBN 0-397-31988-6; Library ed. ISBN 0-397-31989-4. 110p. Trade ed. \$9.50; Library ed. \$8.89.

Ad  
4-6 "Everyone knew that you could get Tip O'Hara to blow his cool by yelling at him," Tip says, not quite sure why he's become so sensitive since moving up to the fifteen-year-old league. He'd been a dependable pitcher in the league for ages twelve and thirteen. Now he had "rabbit ears." The book starts with a lost game, and the coach's offer to help Tip get over his inability to shut out jeering calls from opponents, and moves on to Tip's quarrel with a younger brother whose noisy combo further irritates him. After several refusals, Tip agrees to take part in a contest, joins his brother's group, and enjoys the performance and the victory. At this point, Tip is ready to take his brother's advice, using a trick based on their contest song to overcome his handicap. Baseball buffs will enjoy the action sequences, and the fact that Tip has other interests and familial support give some variety and substance to the story; however, while it's not a formula sports story, it hasn't the depth of most of Slote's writing.

D.V. Brothers; Fear, overcoming

Spier, Peter. *Rain*; written and illus. by Peter Spier. Doubleday, 1982. 81-43056. Trade ed. ISBN 0-385-15484-4; Prebound ed. ISBN 0-385-15485-2. 30p. \$10.95.

R  
K-2 The pages of an oversize book are filled with bright, engagingly detailed, realistic pictures—no words—that show a brother and sister through a long day of rain. They rush about playing, getting themselves happily soaked in a summer downpour; then they come home and climb into a tub together; they play cozily indoors, have their evening meal, and go off to bed. After a wet and windy night, the morning dawns bright, and the two emerge into the puddles and sunshine of a cluttered, cheerful yard. Pleasant to look at, but not very substantial in concept, although it should have the appeal of familiar activities for the very young audience.

D.V. Environmental concepts

Strasser, Todd. *Rock 'n' Roll Nights*. Delacorte, 1982. 81-12618. ISBN 0-440-07407-X. 217p. \$10.95.

R  
8-10 Gary Specter is one of four high school students who have a gig in a restaurant, and they want the same thing every such combo wants, fame. The story opens with the attempted seduction of Gary by an older woman who's picked him up after the performance; Gary, infatuated with his cousin Susan (one of the combo) isn't interested. Unfortunately, Susan isn't interested in him, so all of Gary's energy goes into playing and promoting his rock group. The drummer's mother takes over as manager, the group uses the few contacts it has, scrapes up the money necessary to cut a record—and it all pays off. Whether they go on to fame or not, by the end of the story the group has learned that there *is* room at the top: disc jockeys are playing their single, the critic from *The Village Voice* praises them, and they give a performance that has a crowd cheering and demanding encores. This has enough material about family relationships to give the story balance, the writing has vitality and humor, and the behind-the-scenes atmosphere is convincing and should appeal to the adolescent audience.

D.V. Initiative; Tenacity

Terris, Susan. *Wings and Roots*. Farrar, 1982. 82-2553. ISBN 0-374-38451-7. 186p. \$9.95.

Ad  
7-9 Working as a volunteer in the children's ward of the town hospital, Jeannie is as puzzled as everyone else by the identity of the person who writes the bittersweet prose poems that appear periodically, signed "Yeti," in different parts of the building. She suspects—but can't prove—that it's Kit, a patient who is also fourteen and who is bitter because he has had polio. (The story is set just at the time the Salk vaccine comes along—but too late for Kit.) The title refers to the fact that Kit wants wings and Jeannie roots, and the relationship between them changes and grows as the high school years go by and Kit's condition improves. As the story ends, it is four years later (1959) and the two think perhaps they love each other enough for a permanent relationship, and they know that they will at least be firm friends. The book speaks eloquently to the adolescent's emotional needs, and particularly to the bitter adjustment to a handicap that seems a barrier to ever satisfying those needs, but as a story it is weakened by the rather repetitious fluctuations in the relationship. It isn't just that the story seems slowed by this repetition, but also that the slow changes in Jeannie's and Kit's relationship do not compensate for the lack of action on a larger scale.

D.V. Friendship values; Handicaps, overcoming

Tinkelman, Murray. *Rodeo: The Great American Sport*. Greenwillow, 1982. 81-6359. Library ed. ISBN 0-688-00841-0; Paper ed. ISBN 0-688-01194-2. 64p. illus. with photographs. Trade ed. \$7.50; Library ed. \$8.59.

R 5- A photodocumentary with good captions and with a page of introduction that describes each category of events should appeal to a public with whom the rodeo is becoming an increasingly popular organized sport. The author's preface gives background information about the history of the sport, the way it is organized and run, and the participants. Although the table of contents lists bareback riding, calf roping, saddle-bronc riding, steer wrestling, barrel racing, team roping, and bull riding as the divisions of a rodeo, there is also a brief section on rodeo clowns, a popular segment of the rodeo.

Weinberg, Lawrence. *The Forgetful Bears*; illus. by Paula Winter. Houghton, 1982. 81-10266. ISBN 0-89919-068-5. 32p. \$8.95.

Ad 4-6 yrs. Neatly drawn and pastel-tinted pictures illustrate a story about a bear family of four who are equally (and not believably, even in fun) forgetful. Grandpa Forgetful, who seems to be in full control, saves the day when Mr. and Mrs. Forgetful and their children start off on a picnic and end in separated bemusement. Mr. Forgetful hadn't awakened Grandpa because he forgot where Grandpa's room was, then went into a closet for a hat and forgot to come out; later, when he discovered that Mrs. Forgetful had forgotten the food, he couldn't find the house because he forgot what street it was on; still later, when Grandpa had picked up the other forgetful members of the family and stopped the car to let his son in, Mr. Forgetful said he never accepted rides from a stranger. This is the kind of silly humor that can appeal to young children, but it hasn't the sort of exuberance that can make this kind of humor really comic in the way that James Allard's Stupid family is comic.

Zubrowski, Bernie. *Messing Around with Water Pumps and Siphons: A Children's Museum Activity Book*; illus. by Steve Lindblom. Little, Brown, 1981. 80-29462. Trade ed. ISBN 0-316-98876-6; Paper ed. ISBN 0-316-98877-4. 64p. Trade ed. \$8.95; Paper ed. \$4.95.

R 3-6 \* Zubrowski uses a series of open-ended home experiments to ask and answer questions about the varied devices that can move water in different ways and for different purposes. He is a staff member of the Boston Children's Museum, and this and his other books are evidence of the excellent results when subject knowledge is paired with experience in working with children who are doing experiments. The diagrams are clear and carefully placed, the text moves from the simple and familiar to the complicated and less familiar; it doesn't give all the answers, but it gives all the facts through which answers can be found. None of the materials required is expensive or difficult to procure; safety warnings are given when needed; the light, enthusiastic tone suggests that the experiments are fun rather than work. In discussing siphons, pumps of different kinds, and thermometers, Zubrowski explains physical principles.

C.U. Science

## BIBLIOGRAPHIES

To order any of the items listed below, please write directly to the publisher of the item, not to the BULLETIN of the Center for Children's Books.

*Adventuring with Books: A Booklist for Pre-K—Grade 6*, 1981 ed. National Council of Teachers of English, Committee on the Elementary School Booklist, 1981. Paper. \$8.95; \$6.95 to NCTE members.

*The Aging Adult in Children's Books & Nonprint Media: An Annotated Bibliography*, by Catherine Horner. Scarecrow, 1982. 242p. \$15.00.

*Children's Choices for 1981*, reprinted from the October, 1981 issue of *The Reading Teacher*. Single copies available free with a self-addressed, stamped envelope with 2 oz. first class postage. Write to Children's Book Council, 67 Irving Place, New York, N.Y. 10003, marking your request, Attention: Children's Choices.

*A Comprehensive Guide to Children's Literature with a Jewish Theme*, by Enid Davis. Schocken, 1981. 177p. \$18.95.

*Doors to More Mature Reading*, 2nd ed., comp. by Elinor Walker. ALA, 1981. 233p. Paper. \$7.50.

*Let's Read Together: Books for Family Enjoyment*, 4th ed., comp. by a committee of the Association for Library Service to Children. ALA, 1981. 111p. Paper. \$5.00.

*Notable Children's Books 1971-75*, comp. by a committee of ALSC. ALA, 1981. 36p. Paper. \$3.00.

*Reading Ladders for Human Relations*, sixth edition, ed. by Eileen Tway. National Council of Teachers of English, 1981. \$9.95. Order from Book Order Department, NCTE, 1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, IL 61801.

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*Tools of the Trade: Sources and Aids for Media Selection*, comp. by June Cawthon. University of Georgia, 1981. 35p. Paper. \$3.50. Send checks, payable to University of Georgia Foundation, to Dept. of Educational Media and Librarianship, 607 Aderhold Hall, Univ. of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602.

"Winners for Beginners," by Nancy Palmer. *School Library Journal*, February, 1982.

## AWARDS

The American Book Award for best children's hardcover picture book went to Maurice Sendak for *Outside Over There* (Harper and Row). The award for children's hardcover fiction went to Lloyd Alexander for *Westmark* (Dutton). Susan Bonners won the non-fiction award for writing and illustrating *A Penguin Year* (Delacorte). The award for book illustration, original art went to Chris Van Allsburg for *Jumanji* (Houghton Mifflin).

The 1982 Hans Christian Andersen Medals, awarded to an author and illustrator for the body of their work in children's literature, went to Lygia Bojunga Nunes of Brazil for writing and to Zbigniew Rychlicki of Poland for illustration.



